

NATIONAL DIRECTORATE OF EMPLOYMENT (NDE) AND YOUTHS' UNEMPLOYMENT REDUCTION IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study empirically focused on the nexus between National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and Youths' Unemployment Reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria. Nigeria is currently going through serious unemployment challenges which have threatened national peace, security and economic development sustainability, the establishment of employment generation agency notwithstanding. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey, and Likert 5-type structured questionnaire. Validity test and 0.886 consistency test value was obtained. Out of 400 copies of questionnaire distributed to statistically selected respondents, 561 copies were found fit for use in the analysis, after data cleaning. Data were analyzed using Pearson's correlation (r) technique at 0.01 level of significance, with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science software. Findings of the study showed that NDE significantly correlates with Youths' Unemployment reduction in Rivers State. Based on our findings, the study concludes that the present employment generation agency of government has not done much as expected in Rivers State to reduce youths' unemployment. We recommend among others that in addition to the existing employment agency, more output and productive-oriented industries should be established by government and private sector including the political class in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: National Directorate of Employment, Youths' Unemployment Reduction, Training, Job Creation, Poverty Reduction & Restiveness Reduction

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INTRODUCTION

The issue of unemployment is one of the major challenging factors militating against Nigeria's economic development as a strategic country in Africa. Unemployment is a phenomenon that has eaten deep into the fabrics of Nigeria's economic development sustainability. Past governments have created different strategies to address and combat this ugly menace in Nigeria. For instance, the administration of the Former Military President General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida constituted in the year 1986, a Chukwuma-led committee on March 26 (Olufemi and Olubusayo, 2016). The essence of creating the committee was in specific, to spearhead or champion the cause of mapping out appropriate strategies to overcome the unemployment problems under the direct supervision of Ministry of Employment, Labour and Productivity (Adebisi and Oni, 2012). The findings and outcome of Chukwuma-led committee gave birth to the development and establishment of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in November, 1986.

As a result, NDE as a body was then saddled with the responsibility of designing and implementing programs to reduce mass unemployment in Nigeria. These include the articulating of policies that aimed at developing workable programs with labour intensive potential, obtaining and maintaining data on vacancies and employment opportunities in the country in consonant with other government agencies and, the

implementation of any other policy as may be laid down, from time to time, by the directorate (Olufemi and Olubusayo, 2016). In the quest to effectively implement the NDE programs, the agency came up with certain programs in order to cushion the effects of the unemployment menace. The programs include: Vocational Skills Development (VSD); Start Your Own Business (SYOB); Rural Employment Promotion (REP); FADAMA, I, II and III; Small and Medium Scale Enterprises Development Agencies (SMEDA); Subsidy Reinvestment Program (SURE-P); Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YOUWIN); Better Life Program (BLP); and Agricultural Sector Employment (ASE) amongst others (Olufemi and Olubusayo, 2016). Irrespective of these various and monumental initiatives that were put in place to reduce the hydra-headed challenges of unemployment in Nigeria, the challenges as specifically observed in Rivers State kept on moving upward. This upward movement could be that the NDE programs were not being implemented and sustained, or that the programs have been sectional in Nigeria. Judging from the outlined roles of NDE, unemployment reduction is supposed to be sustained, but the reverse remains the case in the study area.

The criterion variable of the present study is unemployment reduction. Unemployment means a situation where adult and graduate citizens of a nation who are willing and capable to work are not able to find suitable and benefiting paid jobs (Olufemi and Olubusayo, 2016). In relation to this, Fajana (2000) argued that every responsible government of any nation is supposed to monitor and regulate unemployment in order to overcome its attendant challenges. For the avoidance and regulation of unemployment problems, government of any nation (for instance, Nigeria) should try and engage in various means of empowering the teeming youths. As posited by Nanette and Cheryl (1999), unemployment is multidimensional, and this implies the process that aid able adults and youths to be in charge and be able to control their own lives. They further stated that, it is the process that enhances power in people for use in their lives, communities and societies, by acting on those issues they consider important.

The present study views unemployment as a situation where people who are capable and qualified to be employed, but cannot find payable works. The inability for Nigeria to reduce unemployment in the country has created several societal challenges, such as, kidnapping, increased rate of armed robbery, fraud-star activities, burglary offences and numerous other forms of criminal activities. Studies relating to NDE and unemployment reduction abound in Nigeria, but the authors of the present study have not found any in River State as to determine if NDE roles have been able to curb or reduce the challenges of unemployment in the area. It is premised on this knowledge gap that the present study is conceived in order to ascertain if the NDE programs have enhanced the reduction of unemployment in the study area. In view of this, this study is therefore undertaken to fill the knowledge gap.

RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

Irrespective of some efforts made by government at different levels (Federal, State and Local) to reduce unemployment, the issue has continuously presented itself as a major concern to the citizens and government of Nigeria in general, and Rivers State in particular. In every 365 days, universities in Nigeria turn out millions of graduates, yet the existing ones are still expecting to lay hands on mean and sources of income for sustainability. This identified unemployment challenge is strategic in Nigeria's economy and has created untold crises to the citizenry and various governments in Nigeria. Based on the foregoing, the study seeks to empirically evaluate if the establishment of NDE has enhanced the reduction of youths unemployment in Rivers State of Nigeria.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary aim of the study is to examine the extent of the influence of NDE on the reduction of youths' unemployment in Rivers State, with the following specific objectives:

- To examine the extent of influence of NDE on youths' unemployment reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria.
- To ascertain the impact of training/skills development and empowerment on poverty reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria.
- To examine the extent relationship between training/skills development and empowerment and restiveness reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria.
- To examine the extent of relationship between job creation and poverty reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria.
- To examine if relationship exists between job creation and restiveness reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Premised on the study objectives as proposed above, the following research questions guided the flow of the study efforts:

- To what extent does training/skill development and empowerment influence poverty reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria?
- To what does the functioning of NDE impact on youths' unemployment reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria?
- To what extent does training/skills development and empowerment influence youths' restiveness reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria?
- To what extent does job creation impact on poverty reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria?
- To what extent does job creation influence restiveness reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria?

STUDY VARIABLE AND CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION

The study involves two main variables, the predictor as NDE with the dimensions as training/skill development and empowerment and job creation, the criterion variable is Youths' Unemployment reduction and the measures as, poverty reduction and restiveness reduction.

National Directorate of Employment: This is an agency of government established to handle unemployment problems in Nigeria through training and skills acquisition and empowerment of citizens, as well as related policy formulations and executions amongst others functions.

Youth Unemployment: This is a situation where young and capable youths of a nation are ready to work, but unable to secure payable employment to make ends meet.

Skills Development: This is the process of training and acquisition of different hand works (skills) or line of business by individuals or group through the mentorship of experts in the respective area of interest.

Job Creation: This is the process or ability of a government of the day to provide employment opportunities or avenues that will enable many employable youths or adults to be gainfully employed.

Poverty: This in simple term is a state or moment of lack, being indigent for a given period of time.

Restiveness: This is a state or occurrence when employable youth(s) act or display an uncontrollable behavior. The outcome of this situation may lead to rebellious, restless, and unruly moments in a given environment.

Operational Model Specification

$$YUR = f(NDE) \quad (1)$$

$$NDE = (TSDE, JC) \quad (2)$$

$$YUR = (PR, RR) \quad (3)$$

Where:

YUR = Youths Unemployment Reduction

PR = Poverty Reduction

RR = Restiveness Reduction

NDE = National Directorate of Employment

TSDE = Training/Skills Development and Empowerment

JC = Job Creation

CONCEPTUAL/OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

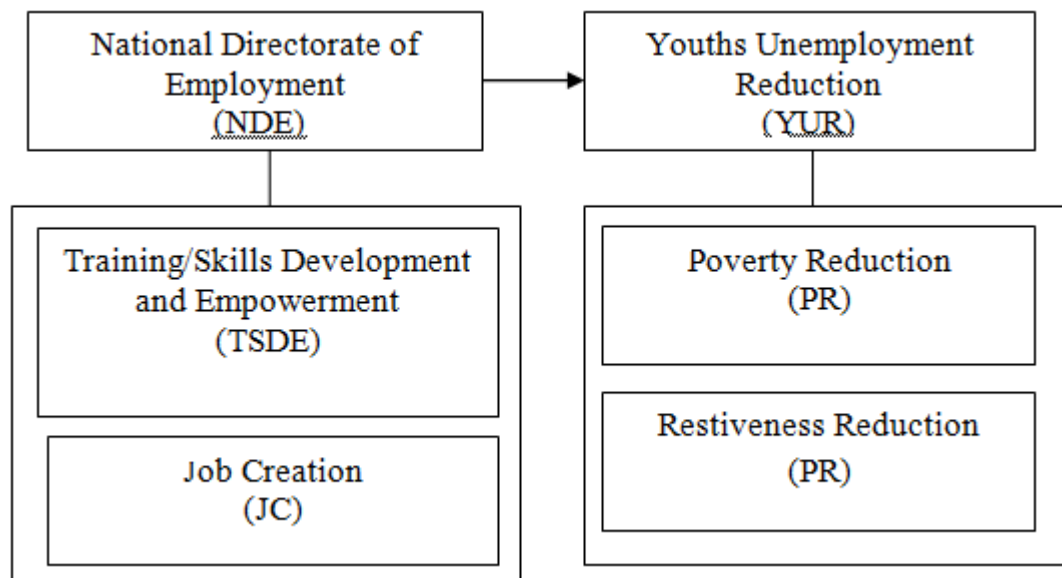


Figure 1: Conceptual/Operational Framework of the relationship between National Directorate of Employment and Youths' Unemployment Reduction in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Source: Desk Research.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the research effort:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between training/skills development and empowerment and poverty reduction in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant association between training/skills development and empowerment and restiveness reduction in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho3: There is no significant correlation between job creation and poverty reduction in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho4: There is no significant association between job creation and restiveness reduction in Rivers State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

National Directorate of Employment

One of the greatest challenges facing by people today in Nigeria is the strategic issue of not securing a befitting job. This has been of great concern to both the past and present administration, as well as citizens and non-citizens in Nigeria. For instance, during the military administration in Rivers State, the government introduced the School-To-Land Programme to handle youths' unemployment. Similarly, during the civilian tenure of Dr. Peter Odili of Rivers State, between 1999 and 2007, the administration came up with different programs (e.g. the adolescent project (TAP), with the key aim of youths and adults unemployment reduction in the state. As argued by Olufemi and Olubusayo (2016), the NDE as a government agency and body, is faced with the responsibility of ensuring that youths all over Nigeria are empowered to be self-reliant. The self-reliance in this regard implies a situation that encourages people to act on their behalf and on their own terms, rather than depending on the direction and support of others. In a related development, empowering the people similarly implies, an intentional and deliberate effort and process of providing the youths, adults, communities, men and women the opportunities from schools and government agencies, in order to enhance and improve their interests, skills and abilities into their adulthoods (Toluwalase and Omonijo, 2013).

The NDE was formed in the year 1980 to design and implement programs aimed to overcome mass unemployment as well as formulating related policies geared toward developing work programs with labour intensive potentials. Unfortunately, preliminary investigation has shown that the body is not doing much presently in ensuring that unemployment level reduces. A contrary view has it that the skill acquisition program of NDE is focused on generating employment and such program has aided to impart vocational skills to unskilled youths by helping to get them jobs, while the loans granting aspects of the body and labour intensive activities have aided to engage skilled unemployed youths (Amire and Ngwama, 2015).

Records have it that there are four cardinal elements of the National Directorate of Employment, and these are: the Vocational Skills Development (VSD), Small Scale Enterprises (SSE), Rural Employment Promotion (REP), and Special Public Works (SPW) that is incharge of ensuring that in the league of the unemployed, they ensure that the low skilled labour are employed and given the same amount of capital level of investments in creating large scale industry (Damachi, 2001). Training is and as one of the core duties of NDE, seen as an integral part of national development strategies in various nations due to its role to human resource development, productivity and economic growth (Dike, 2009). As argued by Coeibs (2003), training is packaged to build expertise or skills in people and makes them to carry out task or group of tasks. We shall devote the remaining part of this study predictor variable section by discussion on the dimensions of National Directorate of Employment.

Training/Skills Development and Empowerment

Training has been variously defined by different experts. Dike (2009) defined training as a move aimed to educate, teach, and change in behavior, aid in making people acquire new knowledge and skills on a given field. Training is said to impact hugely on individual with the needed skill to perform a task profitable in an assigned job (Ogbimi, 2006). Training could also be understood as a deliberate and organized method through which organizations, government and groups provide development and enhance quality of new and existing employee. It is also seen as a systematic way of learning and development that improves individual, groups and organizations (Khawaja and Nadeem, 2013). This assertion indicates that training is purposeful; it aims at creating value to the individual being sponsored and the sponsor. No wonder that Maimuna and Rashad (2013) argued that, training involves some form of activities embarked upon by companies that ends at knowledge and skill acquisition targeted at growth enhancement. This statement indicates that training makes its contribution to overall wellbeing and performance of human capital, organization and to the society at large. In a similar assertion, Raja, Furgan and Muhammad (2011) opined that, training is an essential factor for employee performance because, it increases employees' and firms' efficiency and effectiveness.

The need for training increases as firms dare to survive in the turbulent and dynamic business environment. To combat the turbulence in the marketplace means that management and government will have to lay much emphasis on human capital development in order to remain competitive (Maimuna and Rashad, 2013). Report has it that United States of America companies invest about \$126 billion yearly in employee training and development (Paradise, 2007). Jelena (2007) expressed that knowledge of business and high market intelligence are the most reliable strategic competitive advantage where uncertainty in the business environment is the order of the day.

The training of individual(s), group(s) as well as employees is an intervention strategy for unemployment reduction and competitiveness in business environment and helps to build knowledge in them that can assist them to be productive. In the strategic quest to maintain resource sustainability, organizations and government must of necessity, keep seeing human and employee training and development as being of high value to the individual, organization or government (Maimuna and Rashad, 2013). In addition, training and development is very important to all humans as employees, irrespective of the level. This assertion is on the premise that when one's skills erodes and become obsolete within a given period of time, it needs an update (Nishtar and Amit, 2010). In view of these and as a result therefore, organizational and individual success is dependent on the employees' knowledge, skills and experience which is said to be a function of training at all levels, and it is very essential to productivity.

Haven keenly deliberated and discussed on skill acquisition, training and development, we seek permission to digress a bit in this section by adding that, since it has been reviewed according to the above existing literature that training plays an important role on the life of people; the pertinent question here is, how much effort at present is the National Directorate of Employment making to cushion the challenges of increased rate of unemployment in Nigeria in general and Rivers State in particular? The above question is very important because our preliminary survey indicates that most people do not know about the existence of NDE in Rivers State. Consequent upon this, we suggest that government of the day should put more efforts to encourage the body (NDE) as to show its genuine presence in the study area. This will enable the youths to take advantage of its presence to make a better living condition. The employable youths need these varying training and skills acquisition and development in order to improve earning, preparing them for the future, as well as positioning them with better windows of opportunities to occupy valuable job positions.

Job Creation

Job creation by the government signals the certainty that more employment opportunities will be available through different strategies. Creating jobs has become a focus for donors and government of many states that are agile in nature (World Bank, 2011). The focus on job creation is based on the assumption that employment plays positive impact on poverty reduction and economic stability and well being (Rebecca, Anna, Jessica, Gina and Franziska, 2013).

Job creation is defined as a set of intervention ranging from direct short-or-long-term creation of opportunities capable of absorbing unemployed people. A related empirical study has strongly supported that employment and job creation enhance income levels and reduce poverty state of the people in the low income nations (Essanna-Nssah and Bassole, 2010). In the present study, the further question we put forward is, how much has the intervention programs of Nigerian government been able to create job? This question is consequent upon the fact that the state of unemployment in our society gets increasing on daily basis. A study was carried out by Amiri and Nowama (2015) to examine the contributions of the NDE in facilitating youth employment through skill development and job creation in Lagos Nigeria, between 2005 and 2011. Their findings revealed that between the space of 2005 and 2012, 4188 graduates registered with the job centre unit of the NDE in Lagos and out of this number, 341 were employed. This opine indicates that NDE as a government agency and institution had made huge contributions in developing vocational skills, training and job creation for the unemployed within their reach. At the end of their study, they recommended that government of different categories should establish more intervention bodies that will enhance the reduction of high level of unemployment, and that NDE should as a matter of policy, review their data to better identify some areas where they need to make some adjustments.

Youths Unemployment Concept

Unemployment in Nigeria has been a major challenge, and such has attracted strategic concerns from successive government, and such perennial issue has been in our system decades away (Azihs and Samuel, 2016). Unemployment issue is very critical in any nation and cannot be underestimated. Any economic community that fails to pay keen attention to it may face disruption of work processes, government policies, financial losses and loss of confidence from the perspective of the unemployed.

In terms of definitional concept, Azihs and Samuel (2016) defined unemployment as situations where people who are willing and capable of working are unable to find suitable paid employment. They further expressed that, many studies have associated unemployment as major reason why government of any nation like ours (Nigeria) should embark on empowering its citizens. As expressed in the National Bureau of Statistics (2012), the rate of unemployment in Nigeria, given the number of economically active citizens between the youthful ages of 15–24 years was as high as 37.7% in 2011, while among those within the ages of 25–44 years was about 22.4%. It is further noted that those between 45 and 59 years are 18.0%, while those between 60 years and 64 years are 21.4%. From the above recorded statistics, it is clear that Nigerian youths between the ages of 15 and 24 years are the ones that are dangerously affected. It is also on record that unemployment rate declined from 7.0% in 1987 to as reduced as 1.9% in 1995. The same record has it that after that time, it rose to 2.8% in 1996, and moved between 2.8% and 17.5% between 1996 and 1999 (Asoluka and Okezie, 2011). The National Bureau of Statistics (2009; 2010) showed that unemployed persons constituted 31.1% in 2000, 13.6% in 2001, 12.6% in 2002, 14.8% in 2003, 13.4% in 2004, 11.9% in 2005, 14.7% in 2006, 14.6% in 2007, and 14.9% in 2008. Subsequently, Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reports that, there has been sharp increase of unemployed persons

between March 2008 and March 2009; this implies from 14.9% to 19.7%, 21.1% in 2010, 23.9% in 2011, 27.4% in 2012, 24.7% in 2013 and 25.3% in 2014 (NBS, 2015).

Let us assume the fact that there are insufficient job and employment opportunities in Nigeria formal sector, youths may be left with the option of engaging in casual work and unusual livelihood sources, and this situation may lead to underdevelopment (Onah, 2011). It is also noted that unemployment can be categorized into two different places: those who are old (this means those who were sacked through redundancy or bankruptcy), and the young people who have not worked before. As noted by Awogbenle and Iwuanachi, (2010), the Statistics of Manpower Board and Federal Bureau of Statistics showed that Nigeria has youth population of 80 million, and this represents 60% of the total population of the country. They further expressed that the 64 million of them are unemployed, while 1.6 million are under employed.

Causes of Youths Unemployment in Nigeria and Probable Solutions

Studies abound as it relates to unemployment in Nigeria (Adebayo, 1999; Alanana, 2003; Ayinde, 2008; Murphy, 2008; Awogbenle and Iwuanachi, 2010). These studies relatedly identify the following challenges as the main causes of unemployment, and they are

Lack of Steady and Sustainable Power Supply: Aside those on paid jobs, there many who have different job skills and business ideas, but cannot freely flow because of the nature of power supply in Nigeria. This challenge serves as strategic impediment to free-flow of various business operational activities. It is quite exorbitant to run generator set with fuel in Nigeria, coupled with too many levies that business owners are asked to pay. These have hampered on business activities in Nigeria since they have put into considerations these fees before employment can be given.

Corruption and Accountability: Corruption and poor accountability in Nigeria have eaten deep in our socio-economic structure, public funds that are meant for developmental projects that are targeted at hiring good number of unemployed youths, are being misappropriated and embezzled. In fact, Nigeria how celebrates those who have contributed in bringing untold hardship experience in our system. Therefore, the sincere fight against it should be for all and sundry in Nigeria, as well as the call of maintain leadership transparency and proper accountability.

Rural–Urban Migration: Rural–urban migration is seen as a state where people living in the rural communities (villages) decide to go and live in the cities. This in no small measure, has caused some kinds of neglect to farming to its attendant employee. The flooded cities are where the number of available jobs is and far less than the number of youths seeking for jobs. For instance, take a look at some scenarios where a job advert is in Port Harcourt may be for 50 persons to be hired, but you see over 5000 persons applying and coming for this few chances. This is the practical evidence of over flooding the urban place in Nigeria.

Sharp Population Growth: As at 2006, there were over one hundred and forty million people in Nigeria, with projection that the population in 2020 will be about 180 million people and above. In view of this, government and individual should continue to develop birth rate control strategies to curb the effect of this trend and reduce unemployment of youths.

Low Standard of Education: As expressed by Udim and Udim (2013), there is an argument by commentators that most Nigerian graduates are not employable because, they do not possess the necessary skills and knowledge pertaining to the job. As a result, government should invest hugely and appropriately in education sector in order to enhance the needed improvement. It is important that this should be done to help our graduates be equipped with the necessary know-how

pertaining to their respective disciplines. This is imperative because, no employer would want to waste the organization's resources on any prospective employed without the needed skill and knowledge to take up employment.

Effects of Unemployment in Nigeria

Some of the observable effects of unemployment are as specified below:

Income Inequality: According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in 2010, 65% of Nigerian wealth is placed/found in the hand of few 20%, and this has resulted to poverty, mass unemployment and crimes of various degrees (Hallary, 2012). Hallary further stated that these crises and other associated effects are as a result of failed governance to address socio-economic issues in Nigeria.

Decline in Quality of Life: The quality of life that people lived depends on income level of the people; and low life quality experienced has resulted to insecurity, tension and conflicts. People can barely afford what they want such as, ability to access good health care attention and hospitals, good accommodation and other recreational activities. Unemployment causes boredom, depression, family tension, divorce, violence and tendency towards crime (Muhammad, Tahir, Babar, Shaked, Muhammad, 2013).

Poverty Reduction

One of the greatest challenges in Nigeria is poverty, and this issue has brought many problems to the households and organizations alike in Nigeria, hence the need to ameliorate it through unemployment reduction. Poverty is defined by UNESCO (2013; 2014), as the state of not having enough resources to meet basic needs. Poverty is also described by World Bank as the periods of hunger, lack of shelter, inability to access good and lack of access to good medical care (USAID, 2015). That was why WHO (2017) stated that, poverty results into the state of ill-health because, those living in poverty are forced to live in dirty and unpleasant places, and was stated in 2012 by World Bank that 89 million people were living below 1.90 dollar per day, as reported by Centre for the study of Social Policy (CSSP, 2014).

For CBN (1999), poverty is seen as a state where individuals or households are not able to cater adequately for their basic needs of food, clothing and shelter, and unable to meet social economic obligations, lack gainful employment, skills, assets and self esteem; and have limited access to social and economic infrastructure such as education, health, portable water and sanitation; and consequently, have limited chance of advancing their welfares to the unit of their capability. This definition by Central Bank of Nigeria is more comprehensive since all the elements of poverty antecedent are captured herein, but one common thing about poverty is hunger and good shelter. It therefore behooves on any meaningful government to reduce unemployment as to reduce poverty.

In another development, Ezekiel (2003), opined that poverty is simply, the lack of all the resources that directly lead to hunger and physical deprivation. Ezekiel further stated that poverty manifests itself to the state of lack of voice, power and independence, and subjects the affected persons to exploitation; that poverty make people vulnerable to rudeness, humiliation, and inhuman treatment by both private and public agents of the state from whom help is asked for; where he/she sees poverty as the period of insufficiency, of total lack of necessities and facilities, like food, housing, medical care, education, social and environmental services, consumer goods, recreational opportunities, neighborhood amenities and transport facilities, and so on.

The issue of poverty could mean different thing to different set of people, culture, religion, nation, and so on. Ezekiel (2003) in his study of assessment of poverty reduction in Nigeria, argued that, there is no certain agreement as to the cause of poverty that is universally accepted. The listed few according to Ezekiel are the causes of poverty, and they include; micro-economic distortion, effects of globalization, governance, bad corruption, debt burden, low productivity, unemployment, high population growth rate and poor human resources development, and so on, that may be different from one country to another depending on their level of economic development.

In view of the menace attendant to poverty situations, the present study opines that poverty results from unemployment, and very bad, as well as producing negative outcomes, there is therefore the need for the government to reduce unemployment, and look inward to identify best means or strategies to curtail its challenges in the Nigerian society. This is important because, poor people have no happiness in them and are vulnerable to think and carry out evil plans against the rich or those living a bit comfortable life. It is necessary to reduce unemployment and handle poverty as to enjoy a peaceful environment, but where poverty abound, there is likelihood that majority of the people will engage themselves with evil practices as evidenced in our societies today.

Restiveness Reduction

Yusuf (2014), opined that restiveness among the youths has long become a global phenomenon, and its practice in Nigeria has witnessed unprecedented increase; its presence has been on the increase in almost all communities in Nigeria, most especially in the recent past and presently. Yusuf went further to argue that since Nigeria moved from military to civilian government, there is a mass presence of unraveled violence, maiming of innocent Nigerians including our visitors; and most recently, the bomb blasts, kidnapping and abduction, increased rate of armed robbery, mass human trafficking, unwanted destruction of valuable infrastructures, as well as lives and personal properties. In relating to the above, Igbo and Ikpa (2013) expressed that the above negative developments are unfortunate, and restiveness has now become one of the greatest security challenges men have to face in our society.

Youth restiveness is defined as the extreme form of deviant behavior among youths which is socially unacceptable in any development (Yusuf, 2014). It involves the togetherness of action, behavior and attitudes exhibited by youths which are socially unwanted and unwholesome in the society (Igbo and Ikpa, 2013). Igbo and Ikpa went on to state that, youth restiveness bias has become an avenue through which youths achieve what they want from relevant authorities due to lack of gainful employment. Youth restiveness is also seen as sustained protestation by unemployed organized groups to force a desired outcome of results from constituted authority (Elegbeye, 2005). We add here that unemployment leads to restiveness, which leads to hostility, and the state of acute danger in the society. At this point of this extreme violence and destruction, the citizens will no longer feel free to move, and economic activities get to the point of shrinkage/short down.

National Directorate of Employment and Youth Unemployment Reduction

Adebisi and Oni (2012), investigated on the operational schemes of the NDE and the relevance of its training programs to the needs of trainees in Southwestern Nigeria. The results of the study showed that NDE had two operational schemes and 30 job categories. The study also revealed that NDE training programs met the needs of the trainees as 99.2% of trainees and 98.3% of ex-trainees indicated that they learnt the jobs they had wanted to learn at NDE.

In a similar effort, Amupitan (2011) accessed, if inadequate awareness of the programs of NDE had led to poor emolument in its skill acquisition schemes; if the NDE was actually reducing graduates unemployment in Kaduna State through its skills acquisition programs; and if poor funding was affecting the effectiveness of the NDE in Kaduna State. They found positive outcome from their findings.

METHODOLOGY

The study focused on the nexus between National Directorate of Employment and extent of youths' unemployment reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. Port Harcourt was statistically selected and becomes the major focus of Rivers State population for the study. The population includes all the employable youths in Port Harcourt, with direct focus on the unemployed. In order to arrive at the sample size of the study, the entire youths' population as shown in the data of National Population Commission (NPC) 2006 was used. Accordingly, the population is 1,382,592 persons. Taro Yamen sample size determination technique was used to arrive at 399.48, which is approximately 400. The study adopted the Likert 5-type code ranging from Very Great Extent (VGE) to Very Low Extent (VLE), and structured questionnaire to obtain data from the selected respondents. The validity and reliability tests of the research instrument were ascertained, arriving at 0.886 as the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value for the consistency, with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. Copies of the research instrument were distributed to statistically selected youths seeking jobs in selected public and private business organizations and homes in the study area, including staff of government ministry in-charge of youth bodies in Rivers State. Based on the retrieved copies and after data clean up, 361 copies were found fit for use in the analysis. The generated data were analyzed, and the posited hypotheses tested, using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation technique, at 0.01 level of significance, with the aid of SPSS software.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Table 1: Questionnaire Retrieval and Clean-up

S/No.	Description	Number	Percentage (%)
1.	Retrieved and usable	361	90.25
2.	Not retrieved	22	5.5
3.	Retrieved and not usable	17	4.25
	Total	400	100

Source: Survey Data.

Table 1 showed that among the 400 copies of the questionnaire administered to youths in Rivers State, 361(90.25%) constituted the usable copies after data clean up. Twenty-two copies (5.5%) were not retrieved, while 17 copies (4.25%) were found not usable during data cleansing.

Questionnaire Analysis of some Key Questions

Table 2: Responses of Respondents as to whether NDE is doing much to extent of Youths' Training/Skills Development and Empowerment in Rivers State

S/No	Description	Number	Percentage (%)
1.	Very Great Extent (VGE)	10	3
2.	Great Extent (GE)	24	7
3.	Moderate Extent (ME)	19	5
4.	Low Extent (LE)	42	31
5.	Very Low Extent (VLE)	42	31
	Total	361	100

Source: Survey Data.

Table 2 indicates that among the 361 respondents, the very great extent option scored 10(3%), the great extent category had 24(7%), the moderate extent option response are 19(5%), the low extent option are 42(31%), and the very low extent had similar response of 42(31%). Based on the results responses and by implication, it means that those who belong to low extent and very low extent options are more in numbers and this means that NDE in Rivers State are not doing much in impacting on lives of youths, and have not created the expected awareness about their presence in River State.

Table 3: Responses in Determining the Extent and much to which NDE is doing in Terms of Job Creation in Rivers State

S/No	Description	Number	Percentage (%)
1.	VGE	4	1.10
2.	GE	5	1.43
3.	ME	16	4.40
4.	LE	53	15.04
5.	VLE	282	78.03
Total		361	100

Source: Survey Data.

From Table 3, it is deduced that those whose option are of VGE constitute the lowest figure of 4(1.10%), those who opted for GE where 5 in number which amounted to 1.43%, the moderate extent are 16(4.40%), the low extent option are 53 (15.04%), and those said that NDE has not created much job as to reduce unemployment in Rivers State are 282 (78.03%).

Table 4: Response on Generally, Effective NDE Programs can Enhance Poverty Reduction via Youth's Unemployment Reduction in Rivers State.

S/No	Description	Number	Percentage (%)
1.	Very Great Extent (VGE)	218	60.38
2.	Great Extent (GE)	93	25.72
3.	Moderate Extent (ME)	22	6.0
4.	Low Extent (LE)	17	4.90
5.	Very Low Extent (VLE)	11	3.0
Total		361	100

Source: Survey Data.

Table 4 depicts that, among the total respondents, 218 (60.38%) were of very great extent option. They believe that poverty has eaten deep in our system, and poverty will be reduced if unemployment is reduced through effective NDE programs in Rivers State of Nigeria. The great extent option is 93(25.72), while the moderate extent responses are 22(6%). Those who belong to the low extent option category are 17(4.90%), and finally, those of very low extent 11(3%). The implication here is that, if NDE programs are effective, youth unemployment reduction will be enhanced and such will help in poverty reduction in the area of study. The response revealed that more youths are unemployed and poor in River State. We therefore urge government through its agencies such as NDE to try as much to reduce poverty by creation jobs as well as adequately empowering its citizens.

Table 5: Response on: Effective NDE Program can Enhance Youths' Restiveness Reduction through Unemployment Reduction.

S/NO	Description	Number	Percentage (%)
1.	Very Great Extent(VGE)	199	55
2.	Great Extent (GE)	101	28
3.	Moderate Extent (ME)	32	8.88
4.	Low Extent (LE)	21	5.81
5.	Very Low Extent (VLE)	8	2.31
Total			100

Source: Survey Data.

The analysis in table 5 show that 199(55%) have the view of very great extent; 101 (28%) were of great extent response; the moderate extent were 32 (8.88%); 21(5.81%) gave to a low extent response, while 8(2.21%) have the view of very low extent. It therefore means that effective NDE programs will definitely enhance youths' restiveness reduction via unemployment reduction in the study area.

Table 6: Summary of Result of the Hypotheses test using Pearson's Product Correlation Statistic and Correlation between Study Variables (N=361)

Variables	Poverty Reduction	Restiveness Reduction
Training/Skills Development and Empowerment	0.241** H ₀₁	0.340** H ₀₂
Job Creation	0.382** H ₀₃	0.321** H ₀₄

Source: Survey Data and SPSS output.

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed), $p < 0.01$.

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between training/skills development and empowerment and poverty reduction in Rivers State, Nigeria. It is quite clear from Table 6 that there is positive and significant relationship between training/skills development and empowerment and poverty reduction. The hypothesis is rejected at 0.01 level of significance since $p < 0.01$. The respondents considered training/skills development and empowerment which is a dimension of NDE program as a panacea to poverty reduction through unemployment reduction.

H₀₂: There is no significant association between training/skills development and empowerment which is a dimension of NDE and restiveness reduction in Rivers State, Nigeria. The analysis showed that there is a positive and significant association between training/skills development and empowerment and youths' restiveness reduction. The hypothesis is statistically rejected at 0.01 level of significance since $p < 0.01$. This indicate that effective training/skills development and empowerment as effective NDE program will enhance youths restiveness reduction as a measure of unemployment reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria.

H₀₃: There is no significant correlation between job creation and restiveness reduction in Rivers State, Nigeria. The data in Table 6 manifest that there is a positive and significant correlation between job creations as a component of NDE program and youths poverty reduction in Rivers State, Nigeria. $R = 0.382$ and hypothesis is rejected, since $p < 0.01$. This result illustrates that effective NDE program through poverty reduction will enhance youths restiveness reduction through unemployment reduction in Rivers State of Nigeria.

H₀₄: There is no significant association between job creation and restiveness reduction in Rivers state, Nigeria. The results in Table 6 indicate that there is a positive and significant association between the predictor and criterion variables, $r \leq 0.382$. The hypothesis is rejected at 0.01 significant level, since $p < 0.01$. The association indicates that job creation through effective NDE program will enhance youth restiveness reduction via unemployment reduction in the study area.

CONCLUSIONS

Consequent upon the result and findings of this study, we therefore conclude that effective National Directorate of Employment programs through training/skills development and empowerment as well as job creation will definitely enhance poverty reduction and youth's restiveness reduction via unemployment reduction in Rivers State, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results, findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are advanced:

- More active and effective unemployment reduction agencies should be created, since there is continued increase of unemployment in Rivers State in specific, and Nigeria in general.
- More output and productive-oriented industries should be established by government and private organization, including the political classes that have been laundering Nigerian money.
- We suggest that the present study should be extended to other states of Nigeria in order to further determine the effectiveness of NDE and how the agency has contributed in reducing poverty and youths' restiveness through unemployment reduction in Nigeria.

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